

CHEDWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES – PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – 9th DECEMBER 2013

PRESENT: Mr P Sibbald (Chairman) Mr G Brister, Mr D Broad, Miss L Gallagher, Mr J King, Mr R Richmond and Mrs E Broad (Clerk)
Cllr. P Hodgkinson – Gloucestershire County Councillor

APOLOGIES: Mr A Bell

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES: The Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on the 11th November 2013 were agreed and signed as a true record.

Miss Gallagher joined the meeting at this point.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH – Visit by PCSO Andrea Shutt and Andy Fogden:
The Chairman welcomed PCSO Shutt and Mr Fogden and opened the meeting to allow them to explain about the neighbourhood watch scheme. Although there are already four schemes currently in the village, Mr Fogden emphasised the need to publicise neighbourhood watch further and asked if it could be included in the Hill and Valley News and on the website. PCSO Shutt gave the up to date crime figures for Chedworth and also explained about “Smart Water” for marking property and offered to undertake a crime reduction survey on individual properties if requested. PCSO Shutt and Mr Fogden also answered questions about Community Speedwatch and explained that contrary to recent reports in the press it would resume again in the spring.

It was agreed to bring item 2.3b forward on the agenda at this point.

FEASIBILITY OF A RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT: An email had been received from Mr Robertson on behalf of ChEG explaining the project and it had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. It was agreed to open the meeting to allow members from ChEG to explain the project. Mr Spooner and Mr Robertson spoke and explained that they are seeking agreement for an initial investigation to be carried out into the feasibility of a renewable energy project within the village. The aim would be to provide economic & social benefits to the whole community. The project would not go ahead without the support of the community and it was planned to hold a village meeting next year. After some discussion on the potential problems and bearing in mind that the first stage was only a feasibility study, when Council reconvened it was agreed to support this in principle. The Chairman thanked representatives from ChEG for attending.

2014/15 BUDGET/PRECEPT: The Chairman opened the meeting to allow members of the public present to comment. Mr Robertson gave several suggestions as to what some of the Parish Council budget could be spent on including undertaking an annual survey to establish what parishioners opinions were in the village. This was discussed and concern was raised about the logistics and the frequency required. Mr Brister joined the meeting during the discussion.

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Other suggestions for the budget were notice boards, paying the insurance for the Village Hall, dog poo bins, street signs and benches. The Parish Council will consider these ideas when setting the 2014/15 precept at the next meeting.

OPEN SESSION FOR THE PUBLIC: This had been covered above.

MAIN MATTERS:

Communication between Parish Council and the Public:

- a) The Parish Council Website: Mr King gave a brief update which included reporting that it had been decided to leave the Facebook page as it was at present and that he & Mr Robertson would review the format of the monthly usage figures circulated to Councillors.
- b) Email Alerts: Concern had been expressed that email alerts were being sent out about non urgent matters. Mr King explained that he had used the alert system to publicise the budget meeting simply because there had not been time to include it in the Hill & Valley, he did not consider that the system is being used over used as only 15 alerts had been sent out since it started in March. Mr Robertson is looking at the two tier system & this would be progressed as soon as possible. Miss Gallagher requested that in the future, Councillor King contact the Editors of the Hill & Valley with his suggested wording and elicited their approval before sending out any further PC alert in which the Hill & Valley was mentioned.

Affordable Housing:

- a) Update: Mr Brister reported that he had spoken with Chris Knibbs from Severn Vale Housing Association and had provided him with relevant information regarding the Parish Council land registered with the Land Registry. Mr Knibbs hoped to have the plans ready to present to the next meeting.

MATTERS FOR UPDATING AND DISCUSSION:

Traffic in Village and Road Matters:

- a) Fields Road and Community Speed Watch: Mr King gave a brief update which included the fact that Mr Shaftoe had taken over from Mr Poulton leading the project, a CSW session had taken place on 19/11/13 and CSW signage is being investigated. Mr King also gave the recent black box speed survey figures which recorded an increase in average traffic speeds to 39mph from 36mph, with 47.5% of traffic exceeding the 40mph limit. These increases were disappointing, the only known difference being that the recent survey was done during school term time whereas previously they have been done during school holiday periods.
- b) Request for Road Signs at the Airfield Bend: An email had been received from Dave Hicks at GCC Highways declining our request for permanent “Road Liable to Flooding” signs at the Airfield Bend, but not saying exactly why. Councillor Hodgkinson asked if the Parish Council could email the request for signs to him and he would take the matter up with GCC Highways.

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Footpaths: Nothing further.

Items Arising from Email:

a) Public Rights of Way Email from GCC: Noted.

The Playing Field:

- a) Entrances on to the Playing Field: GCC Highways were just waiting to see Mr Richmond’s licence to transport the planings. Mr Richmond agreed to provide this.
- b) Fence Between Village Hall and Play Area: A quote for £100.00 + VAT had been received from Philip Dickenson. It was proposed from the Chair and seconded by Miss Gallagher to accept this quote, agreed.
- c) Goal Nets: Mr King reported that he had been contacted by Mr Harding from the Football Club asking what to do with the old nets from the goal posts as the club had now purchased their own. Mr King and Mr Broad had found a new set of nets in the cupboard at the Village Hall so it was agreed to ask the football club to dispose of the old ones. Mr King agreed to contact Mr Harding and relay this.

Grass Keep Field:

a) Fencing – Estimate for Repairs: Two estimates for the revised smaller area had been received. One from Philip Dickenson for £700.00 + VAT and the other from George Forbes from Withington for £850.00. It was proposed from the Chair and seconded by Mr Broad to accept the quote from Mr Dickenson for £700.00 + VAT agreed.

Winter Emergency Plan: Mr King gave a brief report which included the recent launch meeting which approximately 40 people attended. The CDC “Battle Box” had been received and was currently in the Parish Council cupboard. An insurance issue with the grit spreader being towed had arisen and Mr King was in touch with Zurich regarding this. Mr King agreed to have a word with Paul Swift at GCC Highways regarding the use of the Parish Council grit spreader. It was agreed to write and thank CHOC for their donation towards the Winter Emergency Plan leaflets.

Playground Developments: In hand with Mr Brister.

Chedworth Village Hall Finance: Mr Broad declared a prejudicial interest as a member of the Village Hall Committee not representing the Parish Council but remained at the meeting while the matter was discussed. The points then discussed at the meeting were that:

- a) The financial summary, prepared by Mr Brister and circulated prior to the meeting, creates an historic picture about what has happened. The VH has declining income and rising costs (especially maintenance costs) which are eating into the cash reserve.
- b) Capital improvements have been paid for by grants and not out of cash flow, there is no sinking fund to provide for future maintenance & there is no indication of what future major capital spends might be required.

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- c) Capital – the only “capital” shown is cash at bank, there is no balance sheet showing the value of the building etc.
- d) Does the VH have a plan to start to improve the business.
- e) The start point for CPC looking at the VH was that in November 2013 the VH Committee asked if CPC would take over the cost of cutting the grass around the village hall. CPC considered that at its meeting on 11 November 2013 and decided that unless there was a credible turnaround plan CPC could not use public funds to give to the VH, and asked for further information.
- f) It seemed unlikely that the VH was insolvent. The 2 usual tests are that an entity has an excess of liabilities over assets on its balance sheet and that it is unable to meet its debts as they fall due. A balance sheet would include the value of the building and that should be ample to meet any liabilities; and VH is paying its debts as they fall due.
- g) It was thought that the VH is owned by a charitable trust and that the members of the “Village Hall Committee” were trustees and had to act in accordance with the trust. The discussion was also opened up to the members of the public present and Mr Musgrave made some comments including who owned the Village Hall. Mr Broad agreed to circulate the Trust Deeds he had & Mr Brister would look at them to try to establish the exact ownership position.
- h) There was some urgency for the Trustees/VH Committee to grasp the situation and see what could be done to improve things.
- i) Mr Brister and Mr Robertson agreed, together with any other suggestions from Councillors, to look into establishing whether there may be people in the village who would be able to assist the Village Hall Committee.

Mobile Telephone Reception in the Village: Mr King raised this because the bad reception in many parts of the village had been highlighted when developing the Winter Emergency Plan. Mr Robertson had already started to investigate what could be done, with some help from Paul Hodgkinson, and had volunteered to champion this alongside the broadband campaign.

PLANNING:

Approval:

CD 9103/F The Orchard – Stables and Yard
13/04377TCONR The Old Bakery - Tree Works

FINANCE:

1. Clerks Quarterly Salary £574.00, prop. J King, sec. P Sibbald
2. Clerks Quarterly Mileage £9.65, prop. J King, sec. P Sibbald
3. Bibury (Graveyard Cut) £120.00, prop. P Sibbald, sec. J King
4. Bibury (Playing Field Cut October) £93.60 Retrospective, prop. P Sibbald, sec. J King
5. SLCC Membership £76.00, prop. J King, sec. P Sibbald

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6. Appointment of Independent Internal Auditor for 2013/14 – Mr Selkirk had written offering his services as usual. It was proposed from the Chair and seconded by Mr Brister to appoint Mr Iain Selkirk as our Independent Internal Auditor for 2013/14 for the same fee as last year.
7. Council in receipt of £150.00 Donation for Winter Plan Leaflets from CHOC

The meeting concluded at 9.53 pm.

NEXT MEETING: (Precept Meeting) Monday 13th January 2014 at 7.30 pm.

Chairman.....

Date.....